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YUGOSLAVIA: Plenum Deadlock Increases Tension

The Yugoslav Central Committee plenum closed in apparent stalemate yesterday after three days of sharp debate. The State Presidency has put the military on alert because of the tension generated by the plenum, [REDACTED]. The Central Committee rejected calls by supporters of Serbian leader Milosevic for the removal of party chief Suvar, and many delegates criticized Milosevic for promoting disunity. The plenum accepted the demands of Milosevic and others, however, to hold a party congress later this year—ahead of schedule. Premier-designate Markovic used his first major policy speech last Saturday to call for political pluralism and a set of specific market-oriented reforms; he threatened to quit if he did not receive a mandate to carry out his program. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The alert is probably intended as a precaution in case the plenum sparks demonstrations. Milosevic's efforts to oust national-level opponents, however, may have suffered only a temporary setback. He will probably intensify his efforts in preparation for the party congress, where proportional representation favors the numerically superior Serbs. Markovic's statement was to some extent formulated for Western ears, but it shows his intent to move on reform. He will probably face stiff resistance from the bureaucracy and local interests. [REDACTED]

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